

NEWSWEEK, May 22, 1967

# PHILIPPINES

THE ORIGIN.

These are the Hukbalahap, or "Huks" (short for *Hukbong Mapagpagpalayang Bayan* or "People's Liberation Army" in Tagalog), the remnants of the Communist-inspired guerrilla movement that threatened to overthrow the Philippine Government in the early 1950s. They are a tiny remnant, variously estimated at between 150 and 1,000 full-time armed men, and their activities are confined to some 120 square miles of central Luzon north of Manila. But on their

\* \* \* \* \*

chosen turf, the Huks rule supreme. Politicians deal with them or else lose office, businessmen cooperate or lose their property or their lives. "It could build up into a serious threat," says Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos. "Their base is increasing. The nucleus is there, the germ is there, the guidance is there."

Mafia: The guidance, for the moment, seems not to be coming from orthodox Communist sources. The Huk movement, Marcos told Newsweek's Edward Behr recently, "is still more of a Mafia type than a Communist cell. Political ideology has very little to do with it. Very quietly, I have gone there and met some of their leaders. Some are undoubtedly hard-core Communists. But basically they are guerrilla leaders with a provincial mentality."

**Company Town:** And Angeles city is virtually a Huk company town. Almost everyone is involved in collections for the guerrillas. "Jeepney" (taxi) drivers pay a levy of one peso (27 cents) a day. Maids and waiters at Clark Field pay a fixed proportion of their tips. Bar and nightclub owners deny making payments, but Manila intelligence officials are convinced they do. "It is an established fact," says one senior Philippine intelligence officer, "that no businessman in Angeles city can

start up a business, whether it's a beauty parlor or a laundry, without being approached by 'the syndicate' for regular protection money." U.S. spending in Angeles city averages \$75,000 a day, and of this upwards of \$500,000 a year is believed to flow into Huk coffers.

\* \* \* \* \*